

## Protecting God's Children

We are all aware of the grave problem of the abuse of children that exists within our society. Each of us must do all that we can to help protect those children entrusted to us. This is especially important for those that work and minister in the Church.

As a critical part of our safe environment policy for young people, the Diocese of Pittsburgh has created a centralized electronic database for individuals who work and minister in the Church who have contact with children and young people under the age of 18. To create this secured diocesan database, all individuals who have contact with the youth of our parishes—clergy, religious, employees, or volunteers—are now required to create an electronic file which contains six parts:

- 1 A completed application on the Diocesan Database at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org)
- 2 A Pennsylvania Criminal Record Clearance, which will be generated when the database application is completed
- 3 A Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance application
- 4 A signed acknowledgement of receipt of "The Code of Pastoral Conduct" booklet. This booklet is available at the Rectory and School Offices or may be downloaded from the diocesan website at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org).
- 5 A signed acknowledgement of receipt of the "Reporting of Child Abuse and The Child Protective Service Law of Pennsylvania" booklet. This booklet is at the Rectory and School Offices or may be downloaded from the diocesan website at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org).
- 6 Documented information that the individual has attended one of the "Protecting God's Children" workshops which are available in many locations throughout the diocese. Times and locations of the workshops can be found on [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) or call the rectory office weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and ask to speak to the Safe Environment Coordinator.
- 7 *All costs are covered by the parish as to not place the burden on our volunteers.*

The centralized diocesan database is our means to ensure that the Church—locally and nationally—not only fulfills the mandate of the Church in the United States as outlined in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the clear requirements of the 2004 diocesan policy, but also meets requirements of state and federal law.

Most importantly, the centralized database is vital in sustaining a safe environment for our children through the Diocese of Pittsburgh. We can expect nothing less of ourselves as we seek, not only to fulfill a mandate, but to be the standard-bearer in society for the protection of young people.

Completing the application that will create your file for the diocesan database will take about 20 minutes of your time. For detailed instructions for completing the database application, receiving the additional paperwork, and to ask any questions, please call the Rectory Office weekdays and speak with the Safe Environment Coordinator at 724-695-7325.